

TN DRUG-FREE  
WORKPLACE DEPARTMENT  
OF LABOR & WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT  
WORKERS' COMPENSATION  
DIVISION

One of the Division's  
goals is to make the  
TN-Drug Workplace  
(TNDFWP) a more  
VALUABLE asset by  
"Believing in Better"

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THE  
Tennessee

## DRUG-FREE DISPATCH

NEWSLETTER DATE

# Meet the Program Coordinator

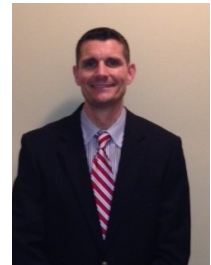
By. Josh Baker, Esquire

Lance Wheaton serves as the Program Coordinator for the Drug Free Workplace Program. As Program Coordinator, Lance is responsible for overseeing the day to day program activities including approving applications, giving presentations to groups considering joining the program and responding to their questions. In a typical week, Lance will receive seventy new or renewal applications for membership in the program and will respond to fifty or more information requests. Each of these numbers has increased steadily since Lance became Program Coordinator. In addition to performing his day job of keeping the Drug Free Workplace Program running like a well-oiled machine, he also supervises the five workers' compensation specialists who field calls on the Department's 1-800 Helpline ([1-800-332-2667](tel:1-800-332-2667)) and is responsible for producing the newsletter that

you are currently reading.

Lance was promoted to Program Coordinator in October of 2008, a little over a year after he started working for the Department, after the previous Program Director retired. Prior to this assignment, he served as the Program Coordinator for the Medical Impairment Rating (MIR) Registry. He was very green and described his first day on the job as a "trial by fire." But Lance was able to weather the initial storm and has made great strides in improving program efficiency. For example, in the period just prior to his promotion to Program Coordinator, the average turnaround time for processing an application was about a month. With some help from other Department team members, he was able to reduce the average approval time to no more than ten working days. In some cases, his team is able to process the application on the day he receives it.

In the bygone era before Lance was consumed by his duties as



Program Coordinator for the Drug Free Workplace Program, he grew up in Kingston, Tennessee, and attended Midway High School where he lettered in basketball and football. After graduating from Midway, he attended the University of Tennessee and walked on to the football team as a quarterback. Lance lettered for three years serving as a starter on special teams as the holder for the placekicker. He was granted an athletic scholarship for his junior and senior years and completed his college career in 1995 after earning a degree in exercise physiology.

It was during his time at the University of Tennessee that Lance met his future wife, Ashli. The couple married soon after he finished school and have two



# Back to the Basics— The Original Intent

By. W. Lance Wheaton

Why should a business drug test their employees and job applicants?

A typical answer maybe that drugs and alcohol are problems that are rampant in today's society and that it would be in the companies overall best interest.

However, safety should be the primary focus when a company engages in a drug testing program. Safety covers a wide range that not only focuses on the company's employees, but also anyone who comes into contact with individuals who abuse drugs or alcohol. The potential for a liable accident could be substantial for any business.



Individuals who choose to engage in drugs or alcohol abuse can attribute a greater danger to themselves and to other people than to those who choose not to use drugs or alcohol.

Thus, the goal of the Department is to make an effort to increase the VALUE of the TN Drug-Free Workplace program to the employers doing business in the state of Tennessee by making the workplace a safer environment. The focus on safety is an underlying VALUE of the TN Drug-Free program along with the benefits (see Lance's Lesson Q&A) provided to active members. These benefits are considered important assets that the Depart-

ment deems valuable to coincide with the Legislator's intention of the TN Drug-Free Workplace program.: "It is the intent of the general assembly to promote drug-free workplaces in order that employers in this state be afforded the opportunity to maximize their levels of productivity, enhance their competitive positions in the marketplace and reach their desired levels of success without experiencing the costs, delays, and tragedies associated with work-related accidents resulting from drug or alcohol abuse by employees."\*\*

Source. (Workplace Drug Testing: An Employers Development/Implementation Guide)

\*\* (from T.C.A. Section 50-9-101. Legislative intent.)

" THE FOCUS ON SAFETY IS AN UNDERLYING VALUE OF THE TN DRUG-FREE PROGRAM..."

Drug-Free Workplace Program  
Rules: Quick Link

<http://www.tn.gov/sos/rules/0800/0800-02/0800-02-12.20120809.pdf>

## Lance's Lesson: Q & A about TN Drug-Free

- I. What are the Benefits of being a member of the TNDFWP program?
  - Participating employers receive a 5 % premium credit on their workers' comp insurance policy.
  - Employees that suffer a workplace injury that also tests positive on a post accident drug screen for illegal use of drugs or alcohol, and those who refuse to submit to such a test, have the burden of proving the compensability of their claim.
- The discharge or discipline of an employee, or the refuse to hire a job applicant found to be in violation of the covered employer's Drug-Free Workplace Program will be considered done for cause.
2. Do you have to renew your TNDFWP application form ?
  - Yes, In order to receive the benefits of the program, you



must renew your TNDFWP application form annually.



TO: TENSOURCE MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIBERS

The **TDLWD** is an equal opportunity employer/program: auxiliary aids and services are available upon request.

### The TN Drug-Free Dispatch EDITORIAL BOARD

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**For a copy of the Drug-Free Workplace  
Information kit, please see quick links be-  
low.**

### Premium Credit Application Form

<http://www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/forms/dfapp.pdf>

### TN Drug-Free Poster

[http://www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/Publications/WC/  
DrugFreeWP\\_poster.pdf](http://www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/Publications/WC/DrugFreeWP_poster.pdf)

### Employer's Program Implementation Guide

<http://www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/Publications/WC/>

## What's Up In Workers' Comp?

### Mark Your Calendars

Date	Organization	Location	Topic	Speaker
3/5/13	NFIB/Reform Panel	Nashville, TN	Workers' Comp Reform	Abbie Hudgens
3/12/13	Duck River SHRM	Columbia, TN	TN-Drug Free Workplace	Lance Wheaton
4/4/13	All Insurance Industry Day	Knoxville, TN	Workers' Comp Update	Jeff Francis
4/6/13-4/7/13	Baptist Hospital	Nashville, TN	Medical Impairment Rating Registry	Jay Blaisdell
6/19-21/13	16th Annual TN Workers' Comp Conference	Nashville, TN	Workers' Compensation	TBA

# 2013

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